

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman**

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Statement by Sean McCormack, Spokesman

U.S. Welcomes Passage of Sudan's Electoral Law

The United States welcomes the passage of the National Electoral Law by Sudan's National Assembly. This is an important step in paving the way toward credible and peaceful nationwide elections in 2009. We recognize the efforts of all sides to forge a consensus and welcome a similar spirit of partnership as elections preparations move forward in earnest. We encourage the full participation of all Sudanese in the electoral process, including residents of Darfur and internally displaced persons. We remain committed to supporting the electoral process, and the pursuit of a peaceful and prosperous Sudan.

In this light, we urge the Government of Sudan to continue forward progress on election preparations by quickly establishing a National Electoral Commission, producing a transparent elections budget that will allow donor countries to begin planning elections assistance, and to allow access by domestic and international organizations that will help prepare for and observe the elections process. The Government of Sudan should also put conditions in place including freedom of the media to ensure that political parties and civic groups are able to freely participate in the electoral process.

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